THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE REGISTERS

A CASE OF MAPULANA A GA MOGANE

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THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE REGISTERS ON SEPULANA: A CASE OF MAPULANA A GA MOGANE

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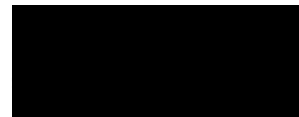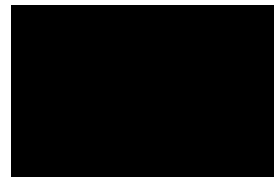
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DECLARATION

I, Mmasello Glothildah Mawela, hereby declare that the dissertation, **THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE REGISTERS ON SEPULANA: A CASE OF MAPULANA A GA MOGANE, is** my own work and that all the sources that I have used have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.........(signature)............

SIGNATURE

.....12/11/2010.......

DATE

DEDICATION

This mini- dessertation is dedicated to my children, David Pomola Moholane, Boitumelo Iglad Moholane and Hilton Sekgaila Moholane for all their support. They never complain when I leave them alone in the house when doing my research. They stood by me through thick and thin. I say to them, WE DID IT. God bless you.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to investigate how language registers around Shatale Location can affect Sepulana as a dialect and Northern Sotho as the standard language. . The findings were: different types of registers do exist and that they have positive and negative impact on people living in that area in both social and educational spheres. The study recommends that registers should be given attention to avoid communicative problems that might be caused by them. In other words, Northern Sotho as a standard language should also endeavour to embrace registers such as those found in Shatale.

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CHAPTER 1

1.   INTRODUCTION

Sweet (1990:56) defines languages "as the expression of ideas by means of speech sounds combined into words which are combined into sentences." From this definition, one deduces that languages are created in order to meet the needs of communication. Languages are distinguished by many features, such as dialects, idiolects, sociolects or styles, to mention a few.

Dialects are subdivisions of recognisably different types of languages found within the speech communities, whereas idiolects are language varieties used by individuals when communicating ideas to other individuals. Sociolects, on the other hand, deal with the social strata where the dialectal differences are connected with the social classes such as educational or economical levels. There is no distinctive line between the registers, the styles and the sociolects as they all deal with social levels.

The focus of the study is on registers pertaining to Sepedi spoken in Shatale location. Registers are important as they assist in expressing identity and social communication. Stuart (1999:16) indicates "a register is a speech variety that is appropriate to a limited social context". It is for this reason that this study will analyse language registers that are in use and the communicative impact they have among Mapulana people in Shatale.

1.2   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

There are two main groups of Mapulana, namely, *Mapulana a ga Mashego* (those whom it is believed they originated in Lydenburg before coming to Bushbuckridge) and *Mapulana a ga Mogane* (those whom it is believed settled themselves in Molototse on the farm called Frankfort).

The proposed study concentrates on the *Mapulana a ga Mogane* as they are in the majority in Shatale.

This group traveled from Frankfort in 1963 and settled in Matikareng, under the chieftaincy of

Pitas Mogane. They worked on the farms and their children attended the farm schools. In 1966, they were forcefully removed by the Whites and settled in Pilgrim's Rest, where they came into contact with the Swati people and foreigners working on the mine, whose language was Fanakalo. New terms, terminologies and registers developed as a result.

In 1972, the group was forcefully removed as the mine expanded. They then settled in Graskop in the village called Hlabekisa. In Hlabekisa, they met a group belonging to *Mapulana a ga Mashego*. Mashego and Mogane were rivals fighting for the chieftaincy. Due to the unrest, a few families then moved to Bushbuckridge and settled in the location called Shatale.

Shatale has two sections, namely: Zone 1 (one) and Magraskopong. Zone 1 (one) has different linguistic communities, namely, Zulus, Swatis, Tsongas and Pulanas. On the other hand, Makgraskopong consists of the people from Graskop, and their main language is Sepulana.

Each time the Shatale people speak, they not only locate themselves in relation to the rest of society, but they also relate their act to communication itself and to a complex classificatory scheme of communicative behaviour. Some scholars hold the notion that a dialect shows who a person is (i.e. Pulana, Pedi or Lobedu) while a register shows what a person is doing (i.e. an educator and doctor).

Even though registers are used by all people, their uses include different dimensions, such as the dimension of power in which the addressee is superior to the speaker, and the dimension of solidarity that distinguishes the intimate relations from more distanced ones.

For example:

Register in Sepulana	Dialectal equivalence	Source language equivalence	English
Komotela bušwa	*Dye bušwa*	*Je bogobe*	Eat porridge

The use of *komotela* shows the intimate relations, whereas *dye* shows that the addressee is superior to the speaker.

'Register' has not yet been precisely defined; it has sometimes been equated with 'any variety'. Other linguists believe that an individual's linguistic repertoire consists of a set of registers and has been applied to varieties of different kinds of statuses. Fowler (1974:230) stresses this viewpoint when he indicates that it "is not easy to pin down the exact meaning of the concept 'register' … very little exact descriptive work has yet been carried out, so the exact examples one offers are largely putative".

For some scholars, such as Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964:111), it is hard to draw the line between style and register. They believe that style is about registers, and that styles are equal to variety. Style is the manner of expression; it occurs in sociolinguistics and has its basis in traditional literary theory. It is used when one wishes to talk about a patently distinctive manner of expression without committing oneself to establishing the exact status of the variety to which a text manifesting this style belongs.

The medieval literary theory assumed that people of different social classes speak on different and mutually exclusive levels of formality. At Shatale, young and old members of the community have their own style of communicating, for example:

Register in Sepulana	Dialectical equivalence	Source language equivalence	English
Nyisiye	*Teyiye*	*Bethile*	Beaten
Fogamo	*Tiya*	*Tee*	Tea

Nyisiye and *fogamo* are the expression common among the people living in Shatale and their dialectical equivalence are *teyiye* and *tiya*. Not all people will use the same registers: registers depend on classes. This stresses the notion that registers deal with the social strata in that lower classes have their own registers and so are the high classes.

The milieu or social institution within which the register functions is very important. Language registers in most schools around Shatale have an impact on the teaching and learning of Northern Sotho as the source language. At home, children use registers to communicate with their family members and friends, while at school they are forced to conform to the grammatic rules of Northern Sotho, such as using the article *o* at the beginning of a sentence as illustrated below:

Register in Sepulana	Dialectal equivalence	Source language equivalence	English
Se pepaganne	*O befiye*	*O befile*	She is ugly

According to the grammatical rules of Northern Sotho, *se* is used for objects such as in *selepe se bogale (the axe is sharp)*. In order to indicate people, Northern Sotho uses *o*, like in the given example *o befile*.

Language registers are the results of linguistic diversities which are in existence in a specific area. The greater range of registers the speaker is exposed to the more effective will be his/her local dealings with the world at large. Fowler (1974:17) emphasizes this point when he remarks that "the style, the register a person uses make him to be what he is." This means a register selected by a mature, fluent and flexible speaker depends on a great variety of extra-linguistic factors. If such a speaker is experienced and sensitive, he or she will possess and employ appropriately a large stock of registers, amongst which he or she will switch readily as occasion demands.

1.3   AIM

The aim of the study is to analyse the impact of language registers on the use of Sepulana and Northern Sotho in Shatale location. In order to achieve the aforesaid aim, the study will attempt to answer these questions:

- What types of registers are prevalent in Shatale?
- What is the impact of registers in Shatale on social and educational spheres?

1.4   OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are the following:

- To indicate communicative problems that are caused by the use of registers and the standard language interchangeably.
- To determine the differences between registers and the standard language.

1.5   RATIONALE

The study is important as it will make language practitioners and academics aware of the

existence of language registers in Shatale. The study is also crucial as it will endeavour to show that misunderstanding, miscommunication and conflict may arise should registers not be given the attention they deserve.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The research will be of great significance as it will analyse the impact the registers have on Sepulana and on the source language (Northern Sotho). It will also serve as the source of reference for researchers interested in sociolinguistics.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

The methodology in this study will describe the data collection and data strategies that will be used to illustrate and substantiate the present researcher's interpretations.

1.7.1 Qualitative Method

This research is qualitative in nature because it has obtained data through the use of discussions and the data is in the form of words rather than numerals. More importantly, qualitative research is relevant for this proposed study because it is mainly concerned with the comprehension of social phenomena from subjects' perspective.

1.7.2 Collection of data

The study has used the following methods in order to collect data:

1.7.2.1 Primary Research Method

Relevant people has been consulted through unstructured interviews. Interpersonal interaction has been in the form of verbal discussion with learners, educators, members of the society and circuit managers. Sixty (60) participants were selected as follows:

► 15 matric students:
  • 5 from Serisha High School;
  • 5 from Lehlasedi High School; and

- • 5 from Ditau High School.

▶ 15 high school educators:
  - • 5 from Serisha High School;
  - • 5 from Ditau High School; and
  - • 5 from Lehlasedi High School.

▶ 15 primary school educators:
  - • 5 from Sedibeng;
  - • 5 from Narishe; and
  - • 5 from Boikhutšo.

▶ 15 community members (they were selected according to the role they play in the community)

The study has utilised interviews based on unstructured questions. Nevertheless, questions such as the ones below have been used:

- • What effect do language registers have on the use of Sepulana and the teaching of Northern Sotho in Shatale schools?
- • How can language registers affect people socially and educationally?
- • What is the importance of using language registers?

1.7.2.2 Secondary Data

The main aim of this method is to focus on the information already collected by other scholars. Information has been obtained from various sources of reference such as articles, journals, theses, dissertations, and the Internet.

1.8   SCOPE

The proposed study has utilised the use of language registers in the Shatale Location.

1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 serves as an introduction.

Chapter 2 deals with literature review.

Chapter 3 focuses on the Northern Sotho dialects: Sepulana, Sephalaborwa, Sehananwa and Khelobedu.

Chapter 4 focuses on the impact of language registers on Sepulana and on the standard language Northern Sotho.

Chapter 5 gives the conclusion of the study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that a study of registers in Sepulana is necessary as this will contribute towards effective communication in this community.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to analyse language and its varieties. To achieve this, the following topics will be scrutinised: language, registers and dialects.

2.2   LANGUAGE

> To presume to define language adequately would be folly. Linguistics and philologists have been trying for centuries to define the term. A definition is really a condensed version of a theory, and a theory is simply or not so simply an extended definition. (Brown (1994:4).

Contrary to what Douglas has stated, some authors have come out with different definitions. Finochiaro (1964:8) defines language as "a system of arbitrary, vocal symbols which permit all people in a given culture or other people who have learned the system of that culture, to communicate or to interact". *Random House Dictionary of English Language* (1966:806) regards language as "any set or system of linguistic symbols as used in a more or less uniform fashion by a number of people who are thus enabled to communicate intelligibly with one another". For Ferdinand de Saussures (1916) in Gumpez's book, language represents shared pattern which is distinct from what is actually said in somewhat the same way.

Pei (1966:141) views language as "a system of communication by sound, operating through the organs of speech and hearing, among members of a given community, and using vocal symbols possessing arbitrary conventional meaning". In the same vein *Webster's New International Dictionary of English Language* (1934:1390) regards language as "any means, vocal or other, of expressing or communicating feeling or thought... a system of conventionalized signs, especially words, or gestures having fixed meanings".

A short definition has been provided by Wardhaugh 1972:3) when he defines language as "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols use for human communication".

Most importantly Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:3) summarise the definitions as follows:

The possession of language, perhaps more than any other attribute, distinguishes humans from other animals. To understand our humanity, one must understand the nature of language that makes us human.

Dialects and registers shall be looked upon as varieties constituting the language.

2.3   DIALECTS

In his work Halliday (1978:38) explains dialects as "what you speak (habitually) determined by who you are (socio-region of origin or adoption) and expressing diversity of social structure". In principle he implies that dialects are different ways of saying the same thing and tend to differ in phonetics, phonology and lexicogrammar.

> Dialects are mutually forms of a language that differ in systematic ways, every speaker, whether rich or poor, regardless of region or racial origin, speaks at least one dialect just as each individual speaks an idiolect.(Fromkin et al, 2007:452).

They believe that dialects develop because languages change, and the changes that occur in one group or area may differ from those that occur in another. They identified two kinds of dialects; the regional dialects and the social dialects. Explaining the difference they refer to the regional dialects as the specific characteristics that occur in the speech of a region and social dialects which arises when groups are isolated socially. The difference in dialects, they believe is marked by phonological or pronunciation, accents, vocabulary distinctions and syntactic rule. They also remark that besides regional and social dialects speakers may use different styles or registers depending on the context.

2.4   REGISTERS

 The origin of the term was depicted by Halliday , McIntosh and Strevens in 1964 as the work of the linguist Thomas Bertram Reid.They used the term in 1956, and brought into general currency in the 1960s by a group of linguists who wanted to distinguish between variations in language according to the user (defined by variables such as social background, geography, sex and age), and variation according to use, (in the sense that each speaker has a range of varieties and choices at different times).

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2.4.1   **Definition of the concept "registers"**

Many scholars have written about language register. They define it in different ways, some define it in relation to its functions and others define it basically in comparison with style. Most of the linguistic writers define the style and the register narrowly, others like Labov (1984:28) gives a broad definition as he says "style means set of linguistic form used by the speaker".

Fowler (1974:17) remarks that "registers are stylistic adjustments of our discourse, most delicately in response to the kinds of communicative situations we find ourselves in". Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964:39) put it in a simple term when they say "a register is a way of speaking that stands in a one-to-one relationship to a situation". They believe that if the register is different, then so is the situation and conversely.

To emphasise that, the Traditions of AA from an internet say register or (style) is a label for the way we vary our speeches sign when we communicate with people in different settings, and this depends on the looseness or distance we feel to that individual (group) because of authority,goal,or acquaintance.

Bernard (1965:34) divides the social situation into various domains: home, the role of relationships and the work domain. Bernard is convinced that whenever the register is employed, roles and statuses can be identified.

For Yule (2006) prestige is the best way of describing "status", prestige is the way of explaining the direction in which certain individuals change their speech. He identifies two forms of prestige: "Overt prestige" which he perceives to have higher social status, meaning it is the status which is positively valued in a large community. He mentioned the other phenomenon as "covert prestige", which he regards as a "hidden status" of the speech style. For Yule "hidden status" is having a positive value and this explains why certain groups do not exhibit style – shifting to the same extent as other groups.
Adding on what Bernard and Yule have said, Wikipedia identifies four different registers according to the situation in which the speaker finds himself. They are formal, consultative, casual and intimate registers.

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(a) Formal register happens when the audience is large and the sender cannot judge as easily if individuals understand the message or not, this happens when the sender is not familiar with the audience and cannot assume what they know or how much rapport will be established. They say it happens mostly when there is a large differential in status and greater difference must be shown or expected. Martins Joos (1967:126) explains formal registers broadly as follows:

> There are a small number of styles or registers which most adults use in everyday life. Formal which includes informative and discursive. Its features include:
> - Grammar which is closely organised with complex structures.
> - Ample vocabulary.
> - Meticulous pronunciation.

(b) Consultative register is used when the audience is small, when the sender is familiar with what the person knows because the sender actually asks the individual questions, when there is a difference between the sender and the receiver like in the case of a doctor and his patient. In this regard the sender is an expert in the matter under discussion (medicine) and the receiver can give input and show understanding.

The patient can make jokes with the doctor or even swear at him or her; she can argue with his or her doctor about the medication given to him or her. This marks the relationship prevailing between the two participants. For Joos consultative register is used for conversing with a stranger and small groups of people. Its features include:

Complete grammatical forms, major sentences.

Core vocabulary items avoiding elaborate terms.

Clear pronunciation, friendly intonation.

(c) Casual register is described as a register that occurs (between friends), when two or more people know each other well, the sender is very much aware of what the other party knows or not about any given topic.

John, "Where is Mr Calamari?"

Samuel, "He didn't't pitch today, Mr Mash potatoes was here, he spent only one hour".

John, "Mr Calamari does not miss the specials,

I hope he is still on his way."

The conversation between John and Samuel shows friendship between them, they know what they are talking about which the next person may interpret it wrongly. One may think that the two friends are talking basically about food: calamari and mash potatoes. For the two friends, Calamari is one of the regulars who love to order it in the restaurant and the same with mash potatoes. Adding on what Bernard has written about, Joos indicates that casual register is marked by these features:

Sentence fragments, fillers like "you know", "I mean" to mention a few.
Semantically empty words.

Slurred forms of pronunciation and varied intonation.

(d) Intimate register is non -public. Private vocabulary is applied especially between lovers as other writers say. This is marked by these features:

Non-verbal communication such as "shrugs" "groans", "raising eyebrows".

Private vocabulary, reduced in range, special meanings and nonsense words.

Heavy use of stress and intonation.

In addition to what Wikipedia has indicated, Joos (1967:126) mentions the fifth language register, the **frozen register**, which he regards as a language that remains fixed or unchanged. Its features include:

Ceremonial language.

Vocabulary archaic and

Pronunciation meticulous.

Religious or legal works both have the frozen registers.
The Lord's Prayer and the preamble to Constitution and pledge of allegiance as reflected below:

[Our Father who is in Heaven. May your name be honoured]
This is an abstract from the Bible. No one can change or amend it.

[We the people of South Africa]

This is a preamble to the Constitution of South Africa.

Languages in both the abstract are frozen, meaning no one is allowed to change it whether being the pastors of churches or senior citizens of the country.

Hudson (1996:45) adds that register refers to "varieties according to use, the same person may use very different linguistic items to express more or less the same meaning of different occasions". Giving an example in an English language Wikipedia says: "an English speaker may adhere more loosely to prescribed grammar, pronounce words ending in-ing with a velar nasal (e.g. "walking" not "walkin") and refrain from using the word "ain't" when speaking in a formal setting, but the same person could violate all of these prescriptions in an informal setting.

Radford (1999:256) adds that "a register is the specialized lists of vocabulary common to a particular trade occupation, topic or activity". Trudgill (1982:101) concurs with Radford as he points out that "registers are linguistics varieties that are linked to occupations, professions or topic." He adds by saying that "registers are simply rather special case of a particular kind of language being produced by social situations."

In support of what Trudgill has said, Fromkin regards a register as a conventional way of using language that is appropriate in a specific context, which may be identified as situational. He further indicates that one of the defining features of a register is the use of "jargon", which according to her is a special technical vocabulary associated with a special area of work or

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interest. She also sees a jargon in a social term as helping to create and maintain connections among those who see themselves as "insiders" in some way and to exclude "outsiders".

A more embracive definition has been provided by Corfield (1991:282) as he mentions themes such as social meaning discourse and feeling as integral components of any register. Corfield defines a register along three dimensions which are namely, field, tenor and mode.

Field refers to the type of social activity constituting the situation.

Tenor is the range of inter-personal relations enacted in the situation. In a broader sense Finch (2005:230) explains the term "tenor" as a term used in discourse analysis to describe the relationship between participants in a discourse. It is one of the factors which affect the style of language we adopt. Two kinds of tenor are –personal tenor which involves the degree of personal relationship between participants; friends, relatives, lovers or just acquaintances. The functional tenor involves more public relationship they have. In the functional tenor rank, social roles and status are applied. The language people use varies depending on interpersonal relationships such as mother/child or doctor/patient or superior/inferior.

Mode includes both the medium of the discourse (spoken, written, dialogue etc). Mona Baker (1957:15) in her definition of the term register provides an indepth understanding of the dimensions mentioned by Corfield. Finch (2005:230) refers to the dimensions as the principal variables.

As far as Baker (1957:15) is concerned, a register is "a variety of language that a language user considers appropriate to a specific situation".

The register variation arises from variations in the following: Field of discourse – This is an abstract term for "what is going on" that is relevant to the speaker's choice of linguistic items. Different linguistic choices are made by different speakers depending on what kind of action other than the immediate action of speaking they see themselves as participating in. Baker (1957) mentions that mode of discourse is an abstract term for the role that the language is playing (speech, essay and lecture) and for its medium of transmission (spoken and written) Linguistic choices are influenced by these dimensions.

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In the same vein, Stockwell (2002:6-7) mentions the three dimensions of registers as Corfield did. He also says that a register can be defined either narrowly or broadly. The narrow part of the definition is to see a register "simply as an occupational variety of language." Broadly, he defines a register as "a sort of genre of linguistic usage."

In support of what Stockwell and Corfield said, Anger (1990:214) believes that language elements correlate the situational dimensions such as field, tenor and mode. Anger (1990:214) adds by saying that "a register concept is a blunt instrument which combines many, if not all of the factors mentioned".

Schiffman (1996:16) points out that "registers are not simply lists of vocabulary, but also involve the existence of preferred rhetorical devices, abbreviatory convections and are developed primarily by a community of language users using them to solve a particular task". He believes that all the speakers of different varieties alter their speech to fit the casualness or formality of the occasion.

Batchelor and Oxford (1982:6) on the other hand provide a description of three part register system based on formality, extreme formality and closer to the limit of extreme formality. From this, they deduce that the term "register" is used as convenient short hand for language variety determined by social, regional and /or situational factors. This is why Jean (1992:36) avers that "[it] is normal for speakers to have a variety of different forms in their repertoire and to vary them according to their need of occasion."

Motivating the statement made by Jean, Biber (2004:135) indicates that it is important for a competent speaker of a language to have control of a range of registers. For Biber it is probably accurate to say that no one controls only a single register, rather, during the course of any day, we all speak and write a wide range of registers. It is therefore crucial to switch among registers. That is why Biber (2004:136) states:

> "The acquisition of register characteristics is fundamentally important at all developmental stages, whether for a child learning that the language used with playmates is different from the used with adults or for an elementary school student discovering how written narratives are different from conversation".

Hoyle (1998:7) emphasises the fact by remarking that "a major aspect of developing

communicative competence is the mastery of a wide range of registers – varieties of language, distinguished by the clustering of linguistic features that are considered appropriate for and are used in different situations". Hoyle (1998:7) in her work has documented that:

> A play is a fruitful arena in which to look for register competence especially in children. Children use different registers as animated puppets representing different characters (mothers, fathers, babies, teachers to mention a few).

Adding on this Roger (1976:114) defines a register as "a role – related code, i.e. a change in register is the formal linguistic marker of a change of role and the converse."In trying to draw the line between a dialect and a register, Hudson says that a dialect shows who a person is, whereas a register shows what a person can do. He also believes that register is limited to occupation of a person or trade. For Biber (2004:136) "registers are defined by their situations of use (considering their purpose, topic, setting, interactiveness and mode) meanwhile dialects are defined by their association with different speaker groups, such as speakers living in a particular social group".

2.4.2 Domains of registers.

Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1994:112) make a distinction between the two domains of registers. They mention the higher "H" variety which is basically concerned with the religion, literature and ethnohistory, while the low "L" variety is for conversion, jokes/stories and intimacy. Through their research findings they found out that Western Industrial Societies lack, certain registers like ethnoscientific or specialised poetic registers. In addition, Mouton (1993:347) indicates:

> "All languages, even those spoken in the most isolated small scale communities exhibit shifts in grammar and style between more formal(High) and more colloquial (Low) poles. "High" varieties are marked by an increase in morphological and syntactic complexity. The high register is associated with the exhibiting an extreme elliptical mode of expression, devoid of all basic sentence components meanwhile the colloquial register employed a very explicit style of utterance".

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2.4.3   Register as formality scale

Halliday (1978:130) regards formality scale as an area where the use of language is determined by the situation. Some writers especially in language teaching use the term "register" as shorthand for formal / informal style. On the note of formal and informal style Fromkin et al (2007:438) state that:

> Nearly everybody has at least an informal and a formal style. In informal style the rules of contraction are used more often, the syntactic rules of negation and agreement may be altered, and many words are used that do not occur in the formal style. Informal styles, although permitting certain abbreviations and deletions not permitted in formal speech, are also rule-governed.

In contrast linguistics textbooks may use the term "tenor", but increasingly prefer the term "style". Finch (2005:227) indicates that in stylistics and sociolinguistics "register" refers to a socially or situationally, defined style of language.

He further says in "many fields of discourse such as religion and medicine have their own special language style". This means that there are professional and technical registers. Finch (2005:227) also remarks that:

> In a general sense "register" is also used to indicate degrees of formality within language use. Between a business letter and a friendly letter, business letter employs a more formal register than the other one.

2.5   STYLES VERSUS REGISTERS

Penelope, Rickford, John (2001) remark that style and register have been used interchangeably. Styles or registers can be applied in the social context to hide information from strangers or from children by adults. It is for this reason that Robins (1980:41) states that "a special case of style variation is seen in the working of linguistic taboo, the avoidance by speakers either of whole topic or of certain words in a particular situation."

2.5.1   Stylistic variation that exists in the lexicon

Stylistic variation tends to be discussed principally in relation to choices in the lexicon. Any utterance involves making syntactic and phonological choices as well. One can decide to adopt

a formal or informal tone, passive or active constructions, abbreviated or full forms depending on the situation. (Finch 2005:228).gives other words for a horse:

Steed

Nag

Gee gee

According to Finch all the above terms are appropriate to particular situations. **Steed** for example belongs to a poetic register; **nag** is slang and **gee gee** is used in nursery.

Analyzing the tem "home' he wrote:

Domicile – official

Residence – formal

Abode – poetic

Home – core

Dwelling – formal

Gaff – slang

The analysis above clearly indicates that the term "home" and "horse" fall into the category of terms which are widely used They can therefore be regarded as core terms.

Fromkin et al (2007) mentions the term "slang" to refer to the variety preferred by the young and old people to avoid taboo terms. According to her a taboo or obscenities terms are words and phrases that people avoid for reasons related to religion, politeness and prohibited behaviour. They are often swearing words. In addition, Scott (2006:391) says "as adults we establish the style of communication to talk to people in different circumstances."

Bell (1997:240) makes it clear when he says a style is "the range of variation within the speech of an individual speaker'. This has been emphasised by the definition given by Wolfram (1998:214) when he defines it "as variation in the speech of individual speakers". In a broad sense Brown (1994:104) refers to style:

> As a term that denotes to consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preferences within an individual. Styles are those characteristics of intellectual functioning (and personality type, as well) that especially pertain to you as an individual, that differentiate you from someone else.

Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1994:112) distinguish two kinds of linguistic variation:

(a) According to user (social dialect variation);

(b) According to use (register).

Labov (1984:28 – 53) defines style broadly. He says " by 'style'... we mean to include any consistent ...[set of] linguistic forms used by a speaker, qualitative or quantitative, that can be associated with a ... [set of] topics, participants, channel or the broader social context".

Other authors put emphasis on grammar and semantics. One of such authors is Holmes (1972:248) regards "style as a matter of selection of particular grammatical patterns and sequences of patterns, and of particular items of vocabulary and sequences of items and the avoidance of other". It is for this reason that Brown (1994:238) says a style is not a social or regional dialect, but a variety of language used for a specific purpose. For him styles vary considerably within a single language user's idiolect.

Broadly, Hoyle (1998:8) explains "within a speech community the frequency with which speakers use particular phonological or grammatical features varies according to the social class of the speaker and the level of formality of the occasion". Anthony (1984 215) defines style as "an outward reflection of the communicator's mental representation of context".

Anthony (1984) further categorises styles into three functional categories namely: style as communicator, style as social convection and style for psychological function. Hymes

(1974:59) describes style as "rules of co-currence and are themselves subject to choice in terms of rules of alteration". Crystal (1969) highlights the fact that individuals are seen to control a number of varieties and devices that they differentially deploy in order to achieve desired effects upon their audiences.

Roger (1976:189) emphasises the two principles of styles, namely: the principle of style-shifting and the principle of attention. According to Roger (1976:189) "the principle of style-shifting denies the traditional monolithic view of language by asserting the nature of language, even in the individual as a bundle of interrelated codes, differing from each other in formal make-up and in social function". Roger concurs with William Labov as he regards style – shifting as "a term in sociolinguistics referring to the alteration between styles of speech included in a linguistic repertoire of an individual speaker".

On the very same note Eckert, Penelope, Rickford and John (2001) regard style – shifting as "a manifestation of intraspeaker (within - speaker) variation, in contrast with interspeaker (between – speaker)." This means that style shifting is a voluntary act between the speakers or within them. Style-shifting "is the ability to alter the style or register in which we are communicating, as the occasion demands" (Finch, 2005:230).

It is upon this note when they say "style – shifting is a voluntary act which an individual effects in order to respond to or initiate change in sociolinguistic situation". Focusing on initiative dimension of style – shifting, scholars such as Bell, Stone, and Schilling – Estes say;" style – shifting occurs when speakers proactively choose among various linguistic resources (e.g. dialectal or vernacular form) in order to present themselves in a specific way".

They also believe that in initiative style – shifting speakers actively engage in social practices to construct social meaning. Adding on what Roger has said about the principles of style, Labov William (1972:70 -100) mentions five principles of style as:

The principle of style – shifting, when one changes from one style to the other.

Principle of formality – any systematic observation defines a formal context in which more than the minimal attention is paid to the speaker.

The vernacular principle – the vernacular, in which minimal attention is paid to the speech, is the most regular in its structure and in its relation to the history of the language.

The principle of attention – history of the language styles may be ordered along a single dimension, measured by the amount of attention paid to speech.

Principle of subordinate shift – Speakers of subordinate dialects who are asked direct questions on language shift their speech irregularly towards or away from the superordinate dialect. Lastly Brown (1994:239) offers a clear description of style when he points out that:

> Styles are manifested by both verbal and non-verbal features. Differences in register can be conveyed in body language, gestures, eye contact and the like-all very difficult aspects of "language" for the learner to acquire.

2.6 STATUSES AND ROLES

As far as this issue is concerned Loban (1966:134) illustrates that social status is a position in the social structure – any position that determines where a position "fits" into the organized whole of a group, organization of society. He says in everyday conversation, we often use the word status to mean "prestige". Statuses can redirect the conversation.

2.7 CONCLUSION

From the discussion above one can deduce that all dialects, registers or styles are languages but not all languages are dialects or registers. We apply registers or style daily as we communicate with our friends, family members, our colleagues and our children. Registers or styles can be applied deliberately or unintentionally depending on the situation in which one finds himself or herself.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPACT OF NORTHERN SOTHO DIALECTS ON THE LANGUAGE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse Northern Sotho dialects and their impact on the language of teaching and learning. The focus will be on Sepulana, Khelobedu, Sephalaborwa and Sehananwa because.they show mutual intelligibility. Crystal (1997:253) defines mutual intelligibility as "the ability of people to understand each other". If two varieties of speech are mutually intelligible they are regarded as strictly dialects of the same language, but if they are mutually unintelligible they are different languages. The brief background of Northern Sotho and the definition of the term "dialect" will be given before Sepulana, Khelobedu, Sehananwa and Sephalaborwa are discussed fully in comparison with the standard language.

3.2   DIALECTS

In his work Halliday (1978:38) explains dialects as "what you speak (habitually) is determined by who you are (socio-region of origin or adoption) and expressing diversity of social structure". In principle he implies that dialects are different ways of saying the same thing and tend to differ in phonetics, phonology and lexicogrammar. Cheshier, Edwards, Munstermann and Weltens (1989:31) define the word dialect as "the combination of specific features, i.e. phonological, morphological, syntactical, or lexical".

They believe that dialects develop because languages change, and the changes that occur in one group or area may differ from those that occur in another. The difference in dialects, they believe, is marked by phonological or pronunciation, accents, vocabulary distinctions and syntactic rules. Dialects are subdivisions of recognisably different types of languages found within speech communities.

3.3   NORTHERN SOTHO AS A DIALECT

Northern Sotho, which is a member of the Sotho group of the South-Eastern Zone of Bantu languages, is spoken by approximately four million two hundred and eight thousands nine

hundred and eighty people (4 208 980) (Teffo 2004:155). The boundary stretches from Middelburg, Groblesdaal, Lydenburg, Sabie River to Bushbuckridge going as far as Klaserie and Olifants River to Louis Trichardt and northwards as far as Messina.

3.4 DIALECT CLUSTERS

Northern Sotho is divided into dialect clusters which are of similar nature bearing such resemblance to one another that they may be unified to form one language. Doke (2002:10) defines language cluster as "an aggregation of dialects which contribute to or use a common literacy form". According to Doke, Northern Sotho, Southern Sotho and Tswana are regarded as dialect clusters of the Sotho group.

The Northern Sotho tribes live in several districts of the former northern and north eastern Transvaal (now Limpopo and Mpumalanga provinces respectively). Lydenburg, Pilgrim's Rest Middelburg, Groblersdal, Waterburg, Mokopane, Polokwane, Letaba and Leydsdorp. The most important Northern Sotho group is that formed by the Pedi (Bapedi), Tau, (Batau), Roka (Baroka), and Kone (Bakone) who are concentrated in Sekhukhuneland.

North of the Pedi the tribes are Mphahlele, Tshwene, Mathabathe, Matlala, Dikgale, Mothiba Nkwana, Molepo, Mamabolo, Tlokwa, Birwa, Kwena, Moletši and Hananwa tribes.
In the North Eastern part of the Sotho area there are Lobedu, Phalaborwa (Makhušane, Selwane, Maseke and Mašišimale), Nareng(Sekororo and Letswalo), Maake, Mametša and Thabine (Bathabine). In the Eastern region districts of Pilgrim's Rest, Bushbuckridge and Lydenburg there is Pulana, Pai, and Kutswe tribes.

3.5 CLASSIFICATIONS OF THE NORTHERN SOTHO DIALECTS

Krige (1937:354) classified Northern Sotho dialects into groups. Below is the illustration of this classification:

Central Sotho cluster-Pedi, Tau, Kone and Kopa

Eastern Cluster- Kutswe, Pai and Pulana

North Easttern Cluster- Phalaborwa, Lobedu, Mamabolo, Letswalo, Mametsa, Mahlo and Kgaga.

Northern Sotho-Mphahlele, Tshwene, Mathabatha, Maja, Mothapo, Matlala, Molepo, Tlokwa, Dikgale, Moletsi and Hananwa.

The provisional classification of the Northern Sotho subgroup into dialects clusters by the Department of African Languages, University of South Africa is as follows:

South Central

Sekopa-East of Groblersdal

Sendebele-North of Potgietersrus

Central Northern Sotho Dialect

Sepedi,Sekone and Setau-Sekhukhuneland and Lydenburg

East Central

Sekutswe, Sepulana-North and South East of Pilgrim's Rest

North Eastern

Khelobedu-Duiwelskloof area

Sephalaborwa-Phalaborwa area

Sedzwabo-Tsaneen and Surrounding

Eastern

Sepai-Hazyview, Numbi and White River

North Western

Setlokwa and Sehananwa-Pietersburg, Bochum, Blouberg and Alldays

Matlala, Moletsi and Mamabolo-Pietersburg.

Dialects are spoken in all parts of the world. Almost all the languages have their own dialects. Although undeniably they have an impact on the learning of the standard language, the researcher will concentrate on Sepulana, Sehananwa, Khelobedu and on Sephalaborwa forms.

Although the differences between a language and a dialect may not always be explicit many scholars nevertheless concur that the said concepts are not the same. Fromkin et al (2005:3) regard language as "the source of human life and power". In the same vein Taylor and Taylor (1990:5) state: "A language is a system of signs (e.g. speech sound, hand gestures and letters) used to communicate messages".

3.5.1 SEPULANA

The Mapulana are mainly found in the Eastern Region Districts of Pilgrim's Rest, Bushbuckridge and Lydenburg. They live together with the Pai and Kutswe tribes. These dialects bear a strong impression of Tsonga and Swazi especially Pai. The researcher will concentrate on *Mapulana a ga Mogane* who are found in Bushbuckridge in Shatale Location. This tribe settled themselves in Pilgrim's Rest. Due to the expansion of the mines they were forcefully removed and transported to Frankfort which was a farm owned by the whites.

As the whites farms expanded they removed the local people in the area. The Mapulana were forcefully removed to Boukersluck near Drie Rondawells. There they named their village '**Hlabekisa**', meaning "we shall make them envy us". They built big and beautiful houses, schools and beautiful churches. Indeed they were envied by the tribe under chief Mashego who occupied the land first. Hatred and jealousy emerged which lead to unrest between the two tribes.

Due to the unrest between the two chiefs, Chief Mogane and Chief Mashego, most people moved from Hlabekisa to Bushbuckridge where they are now. The study will revolve around

Mapulana a ga Mogane, those who moved to Bushbuckridge and occupied the portion called Magraskopong (Zone Three). Their language is Sepulana which is one of the dialects of Northern Sotho.

A.   COMPARISON OF SEPULANA AND THE STANDARD LANGUAGE

- **Lexical differences**

Krige (1937:356) identifies two types of lexical differences: radical lexical differences and lexical differences that developed from the same proto-forms but which differ phonetically. Examples of such forms appear below as follows;

Lexical terms that differ radically; (they cannot be traced back to a common ancestor).

Northern Sotho	Sepulana	English

Nouns

Northern Sotho	Sepulana	English
Leloko	lešaga	relative
Kilana	sekwekwe	gizzard
Mme	mmane	mother
Lekhwafa	mantšikinyane	armpit
Sefebe	sekhebereše	sex worker
Lešaša	mošayi	stick
Segwegwe	sekwele	frog
Tee	tiya	tea
Dikgobe	dihlaku	stamp
Marotse	matshodi	pumkins
Peulwane	lefokotswane	swallows
Mokoko	mokolo	spinal cord
Masantase	matlepisi	sneakers
Dintši	dokgofe	eyebrows
Dintši	dithokwane	flies
Lefela	selokwane	maize

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Mafera	maghweghwe	brackets
Ditedu	makgakga	beard
Megokgo	monepedi	tears
Dintlwangwedi	botshetshe	termites

Names denoting colours

Tsotwa	kheri	yellow
Hwibidu	khubedu	red
Ntsho	phifadu	black

Verbs

Betha	teya	beat
Feta	tlola	pass
Galoga	pauga	fade
Bolela	bolabola	talk
Raloka	kgana	play
Tšhela	topetsa	pour
Phahlalala	tlalagana	spread
Betha	teya	hit
Myemyela	ngwalangwala	smile
Kgola	teka	tripped
Fereya	kgeya	date
Rutha	hlapela	swim
Theetša	theetsela	listen
Bose	natefa	delicious
Soba	tšipa	pinch
Fereya	kgeya	date

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- **Lexical items that probably developed from the same proto-forms but differ phonetically.**

Northern Sotho	Sepulana	English
Names		
Mošemane	mošemanyana	boy
Banenyana	bannyana	girls
Verbs		
Lla	lela	cry
Dira	maka	make
Fula	kga	pickup
Fula	hula	graze
Raloka	Kgana	play
Foraya	gadika	fry
Tsatsela	tsetsekele	sneak
Tlatlampela	tsetserempela	reach

Few morphological differences between Northern Sotho and Sepulana will be indicated below for illustrative purposes.

- **Reflexive morpheme (i)**

Northern Sotho	Sepulana	English
Ipona	tepona	see oneself
Ithata	terata	love oneself
Itseba	tetšiba	know oneself

Northern Sotho	Sepulana	English
Na le koloi	na le kare	has a car

* **Locative nouns**

Norhern Sotho	Sepulana	English
Motseng	motšing	at home
Metsing	metšing	in water

3.5.2 SEHANANWA

Krige (1937:354) points out that the Hananwa, who were originally Ba ha Malete, traced their origin to chief Malete, a sub-chief under Mangwato in Bechuanaland. Sehananwa is also spoken by Babirwa in Bobonong, on the border between Zimbabwe and Botswana.

A. COMPARISON OF SEHANANWA AND THE STANDARD LANGUAGE

* **Lexical terms that differ radically and cannot be traced back to a common ancestor.**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English

Nouns

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Phepheng	letšhokgwa	scorpion
Sehlare	more	tree
Leloko	lesaga	relative
Legare	setsheetshwee	razor blade
Kilana	sekoko	gizzard
Morula	mokgope	marula

Verbs

Betha	deda	hit
Feta	pota	pass
Galago	fafa	fade
Folotsa	tshipa	fail
Bolela	bua	talk
Aga	haya	build

- **Lexical items developed from the same photo-form**

Nouns

Northern Sotho	**Sehananwa**	**English**
Mosemane	mosemaana	boy
Mosetsana	mosidjaana	girl
Bananyana	balenyana	girls
Lehodu	lesodu	thief
Lehumo	lekhumo	wealth

Verbs

Northern Sotho	**Sehananwa**	**English**
Lla	lela	cry
Dira	dia	do
Hwa	swa	die
Fula	bula	graze
Bula	fula	open

- **Phonetics-phonological characteristics of Sehananwa**

According to Boshego (2002:13) phonetics deals with the articulation of human speech sound and phonology looks into the functioning of those sounds in a specific language.

Vowels

According to Boshego Sehananwa speakers tend to articulate mid-high vowels higher than they usually are articulated in Sepedi. This is marked by these examples:

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
mosemane	mosimaana	boy
[moçimane]	[mosima:na]	
Tšea	djiya	take
[tšea]	[dzija]	

Consonants

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
b [β] bala/bula	b[β] or [f] bala/fula	read/open
f [f] fela	f[Φ] Φela	only
g[γ] raga	g[h] hama	milk
t[t] feta	t[r] Φera	pass
t[t] leta	t[d] leda	wait

- **Reflexive 'i'**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Ipon	kepona	see one's self
Ithata	kethata	love one's self
Ikama	kekama	comb one's self
Ingwala	kengwala	write oneself
Itira	ketira	do oneself
Itheta	ketheta	praise oneself
Itseba	ketseba	know oneself

- **Causative suffix –iš**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English

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Rekiša	rekisa	sell
Hlapiša	thapisa	bath
Rakiša	rakisa	chase
Hlagiša	thagisa	published
Mmelegiša	mmelegisa	help her give birth
Mosegiša	mosegisa	make her laugh
Motshediša	motshedisa	make her jump

- **The relative suffix –go**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Remago	remaho	cutting
Gamago	gamaho	milking
Dulago	dulaho	staying
Opelago	opelaho	singing
Apeago	apeyaho	cooking

- **Associative copula (na le)**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
O na le maaka	o no maaka	lying
Ke na le ngwana	ke no ngwana	have a baby
O na le koloi	o no koloi	he has a car

- **Negative morpheme ga ke/ ga go**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Ga ke ye	ha se ye	not going
Ga ke nayo	ha se na	don't have
Ga go selo	ha ho na	nothing

- **Augmentative nouns**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Tabagadi	tabahadi	big issue
Ntlogadi	ntohadi	big house

- **Interogative particles**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Bjale!	andong!	and now!
Hleng!	hono!	and then!
Afa!	andong!	isn't it?
Efela!	andong!	therefore!

- **Auxiliary verbs**

Northern Sotho	Sehananwa	English
Fo	lo	just
No	lo	simply
Dio	ilo	just
Tlo	tlo	will
Tšh	ko	just now

3.5.3 KHELOBEDU

The Balubedu trace their origin to Bakhalaka(Zimbabwe); as part of their praise explains:

> Ge baana ba kolobe ya ṭadza,
> batho ba khelobudi kha Bokhalaga,
> khe khe ileho gokwa lekhwekhwe;
> kha re batho ha ke runi;
> kha fera, ka kwa lekhwekhwe,
> kha re batho, myayeni.

English translation

> They (the Lobedu) venerate a wild boar,
> they are an offspring of Zimbabwe,
> which, when is saw grain,
> said that people were rich,
> it passed, thereafter contracted scab,
> and said, people, your mother is Dzungudini
> Krige (1947:5)

Boshego (2002:11) regards Khelobedu as a sister dialect to Sepulana, Sehananwa, Setlokwa and Sekone. The researcher will compare Khelobedu to Northern Sotho which is regarded as the standard language.

A. COMPARISON OF KHELOBEDU AND NORTHERN SOTHO

• **Lexical differences**

According to linguists, two types of lexical differences are distinguished: radical lexical differences and lexical differences that developed from same photo-form but differ phonetically.

Lexical terms that differ radically and cannot be traced back to a common ancestor.

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	English
Nouns		
Leloko	lešakga	relative

Kilana	khidjelo	gizzard
Mme	mmagwe	mother
Lekhwafa	lefafa	armpit
Sefebe	kheke	sex worker
Lešaša	lesasa	stick
Segwegwe	khedula	frog
Tee	fofo	tea
Dikgobe	dikokoro	stamp

Verbs

Northen Sotho	Khelobedu	English
Feta	puda	pass
Galoga	pauloga	fade
Bolela	apa	talk
Raloka	thapa	play
Tšhela	tshela	pour
Betha	tiya	hit
Myemyela	myemyela	smile
Kgola	khokholwa	tripped
Fereya	apisa	date
Rutha	khida	swim
Theetša	theetsa	listen

- **Lexical items that probably developed from the same proto-form but differ phonetically.**

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	English

Names

| Mošemane | mosimaana | boy |
| Banenyana | bannyana | girls |

Verbs

Lla	lela	cry
Dira	dia	make
Fula	fula	pickup
Fula	fula	graze
Gadika	gadika	fry
Tsatsela	tsatsela	sneak
Tlatlampela	tlotlomela	reach

Few morphological differences between Northern Sotho and Khelobedu shall be indicated below for illustrative purposes.

- **Reflexive morpheme (i)**

Northern Sotho	**Khelobedu**	**English**
Ipona	zwibona	see oneself
Ithata	zwithata	love oneself
Itseba	zwitseba	know oneself
Itokolla	zwitokolla	free oneself
Ikama	zwikama	comb oneself

- **Causative suffix-iš**

Northern Sotho	**Khelobedu**	**English**
Rekiša	rekisa	sell
Hlapiša	thapisa	bath'
Ješa	lisa	feed'

- **Negative morpheme ga ke/ ga go**

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	English
Ga ke ye	nkhe ye	not going

- **Interrogative particle**

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	English
Bjale	zwenu	and now
Afa	afa	therefore
Efela	andon	isn't it?

- **Relative suffix-go**

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	Engliah
Rekišago	rekisaho	selling
Jago	djaho	eating
Binago	binaho	dancing
Balago	balaho	reading
Hlapago	thapaho	bathing
Sepelago	sepelaho	walking
Segago	segaho	laughing

- **Associative Copula (na le)**

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	English
Na le koloi	ke no koloi	I got a car

- **Locative suffix –ng**

Northern Sotho	Khelobedu	English
Sekolong	khekolone	school
Kerekeng	kerekene	church
Thabeng	thabene	mountain
Tseleng	tselene	path
Toropong	toropone	town
Sekotlelong	khekotelone	dish
Nokeng	nokene	river

3.5.4 BAPHALABORWA

The Baphalaborwa, whose totem is Noko (porcupine) had their origin in Bokhalaka, from where they migrated southwards in a direction east of their present location, and came to rest at the junction of the Letaba and Olifants rivers. They later spread westwards as far as the vicinity of Gravelotte (Krige, 1937:345). When they praise themselves they say:

> Phalaborwa bollanoto;
> gwa lla theku bosele;
> molepje tsatsi le a fisa;
> Maila swiswi la boroka;
> la ifala pula e a na;
> Mabele re lema leotša;
> lefela re lemela mpeng;
> Tlala ge e wele mpepu ngwanake re tshabe;
> mabele re yo lema pele;
> moeti wa pele ga se mošala morago;
> thabeng ya Sealeng sa Mmamohubi mailwa go šupsa;
> Mo go robetšego magoši ka moka a bollanoto;
> robalang lena bo mmadikgona; motsheku ga tshekwa;
> mahlaku marapalala la epela mohlwa o a ja".

English translation

> "Phalaborwa bollanoto;
> when the bird sings it is dawn;
> Phalaborwa is hot;
> allergic to the dark of the north;

when it darkens it rains;
we plough the sorghum;
mealies are for eating;
when starving, we leave;
we shall plough where we are going;
the one in the forefront is not the winner;
on mount Sealeng;
where all the bollanoto chiefs have been buried;
rest in peace all of you".

A. COMPARISON OF SEPHALABORWA AND NORTHERN SOTHO

- **Lexical differences**

  Lexical terms that differ radically and cannot be traced back to a common ancestor.

Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	English
Nouns		
Leloko	lesaga	relative
Kilana	khekhwekhwe	gizzard
Mme	bomma	mother
Lekhwafa	lekhwafa	armpit
Sefebe	khethotholo	sex worker
Lešaša	lesasa	stick
Segwegwe	khedula	frog
Tee	fofo	tea
Dikgobe	lekokoro	stamp
Verb		
Betha	dia	hit
Feta	putha	pass
Galoga	bauloga	fade
Bolela	apa	talk
Raloka	thapa	play

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Tšhela	tshela	pour
Fereya	apisa	date
Rutha	khida	swim

- **Lexical items that probably developed from the same proto-form, but which differ phonetically.**

Northern Sotho	**Sephalaborwa**	**English**

Names

Mošemane	mosimaana	boy
Banenyana	bannyan	girls

Verbs

Lla	lela	cry
Dira	dia	make
Fula	fula	pickup
Fula	fula	graze
Tlatlampela	totombela	reach out

Few morphological differences between standard language and Sephalaborwa.

- **Reflexive morpheme (i)**

Northern Sotho	**Sephalaborwa**	**English**
Ipona	tswipona	see oneself
Ithata	tswithatha	love oneself
Itseba	tswitseba	to know oneself
Itokolla	tswitokolla	to free oneself
Ikama	tswikama	to comb oneself

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- **Causative suffix-iš**

Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	English
Rekiša	rekisa	sell
Hlapiša	thapisa	bath
Ješa	djesa	feed

- **Negative morpheme ga ke/ ga go**

Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	English
Ga ke ye	ga ke ye	'not going'

- **Interrogative particle**

Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	English
Bjale	andone	isn't it?
Afa	afa	any how

- **Relative suffix-go**

Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	Engliah
Rekišago	rekisaho	selling
Jago	jaho	eating
Binago	binaho	dancing
Balago	balaho	reading
Hlapago	thapaho	bathing
Sepelago	sepelaho	walking
Segago	sehaho	laughing

- **Associative Copula (na le)**

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Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	Engish
Ke na le koloi	ke no koloi	I have a car

- **Locative suffix –ng**

Northern Sotho	Sephalaborwa	English
Sekolong	khekolone	school
Kerekeng	kerekeng	church
Tseleng	Tselene	church
Sekotlelong	sekotlelone	dish
Nokeng	nokene	river

3.6   CONCLUSION

As it has been seen in the discussion, dialects have a negative impact on Sepedi as a standard language. Learners using dialects at their homes to communicate find it difficult to adhere to the grammatical rules of the standard language hence the high failure rate in Sepedi

On the other hand, however, dialects are not a disadvantage but rather an advantage that need to be recognized and be embraced. Parents and community members should encourage their children to use their dialects as they are their pride. In the next chapter, language registers prevailing among *Mapulana a ga Mogane* will be discussed.

CHAPTER 4

COLLECTION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to analyse types of registers that are prevalent in Shatale and their impact on social and educational spheres. Questions related to the theme were designed in which the respondents were required to answer during interviews. The main objective of the interviews was to analyse the communicative problems that may be caused by the registers.

4.2 COLLECTION OF DATA

Interviews were conducted among the following groups:

A: 15 young people;

B: 30 educators and

C: 15 community members.

All the 60 represent people living at Shatale. Stratified sampling was used and was found relevant as the composition of the participants was homogeneous. The research as a whole was carried out within a period of twelve weeks. However, targeting and sampling took the researcher two weeks. Public school learners, educators and community members were visited and discussions about the study took place. The purpose of the discussion was to introduce the researcher and the aim of the study to the respondents. Copies of the questions pertaining to the study were distributed among the respondents so that they could be acquainted with the central issue of the study and to create a good rapport with them.

Unstructured interviews of thirty minutes were conducted with sixty participants. Each question was allocated thirty minutes. The respondents were asked:

3.4.1 (a) What are the types of registers prevalent in Shatale?

(b) What is the impact of registers in Shatale on social and educational spheres?

4.3   DATA ANALYSIS

Do registers exist in Shatale?

The respondents argue that people living in Shatale use registers when they communicate. Some believe registers do indeed exist while others deny their existence, and others are uncertain.

Statistically the responses can be illustrated as follows.

TABLE 1

	Youth	%	Educators	%	Community members	%
Existence of registers	8	53.3	15	100	10	66.6
No registers	5	33.3	0	0	3	20
No answers	2	13.3	0	0	2	13.3

From the above statistics, it is evident that the majority of the respondents are aware of the existence of language registers among the people living at Shatale; 53.3% of youth; 100% of educators and 66.6% of community members. It is important to notice that the information was given by the Shatale people themselves.

Only a few people are not aware and others do not have an idea of what registers are. The majority of the respondents mentioned types of registers which are prevalent in Shatale. Below is the list they provided.

• **Registers for taboos**

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica volume 11*(1990:483) "A taboo is the prohibition

of an action or the use of an object based on ritualistic distinctions of them either as being sacred or as being dangerous or unclean". This is also stressed by Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:443) when they declare that "taboos are acts or language that are forbidden or to be avoided". They believe that forbidden acts or language reflect particular customs and views of the society.

Pei (1966:141) views language as "a system of communication by sound, operating through the organs of speech and hearing, among members of a given community, and using vocal symbols possessing arbitrary conventional meaning". In the same vein *Webster's New International Dictionary of English Language* (1934:1390) regards language as "any means, vocal or other, of expressing or communicating feeling or thought... a system of conventionalized signs, especially words, or gestures having fixed meanings". A short definition has been provided by Wardhaugh (1972:3) who defines language as "a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication".

Most importantly Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2007:3) summarise the definitions as follows:

> The possession of language, perhaps more than any other attribute, distinguishes humans from other animals. To understand our humanity, one must understand the nature of language that makes us human. According to the philosophy expressed in the myths and religions of many people, it is the language that is the source of human life and power.

Holmes (1972:248) regards communication "as a matter of selection of particular grammatical patterns and sequences of patterns, and of particular items of vocabulary and sequences of items and the avoidance of other". Fromkin et al (2007:3) mention the term "slang" to refer to the variety within the young and old people to avoid taboo terms.

According to them taboo or obscenities are terms or words and phrases that people avoid for reasons related to religion, politeness and prohibited behaviour. These are often swearing words. In addition, Scott (2006: 391) states that "as adults we establish the style of communication to talk to people in different circumstances."

Proctor (1997:1484) defines taboo as "the avoidance among a particular group of people, of particular actions or words for religious or social reasons". It is important to note that taboo

encompasses forbidden words or actions. She further indicates that "A taboo is a strong social prohibition against words, objects, actions or people that are considered undesirable by a group, culture or society".

Taboo, ban, disallowed, inhibition, interdiction and prohibition are synonymous words. Something which is banned by the law is prohibited, disallowed or interdicted. In our society words that describe sex, body parts and their functions are prohibited in the sense that they may bring disorder in the community. Augmenting on that Akmajian, Demers, Farmer and Harnish (1990:256) define taboo as words "that are to be avoided entirely, or at least avoided in 'mixed company' or 'polite company'".

South Africa is a multicultural country in which its citizens are free to practise what they want. One culture may practice what the other culture regards as taboos. For instance, *makaka* is a taboo in Sepedi while its English equivalent faeces is acceptable. All cultures have taboo words, below is Anglo-Saxon taboo words and Latinate acceptable words depicted by Fromkin et al (2007):

Anglo-Saxon Taboo   **Latinate Acceptable Words**

Cunt   vagina
Shit   faeces
Tits   mammary gland
Dickhead   penis

In the Christian community, taboos abound. In the *Good News Bible* (Exodus 20:1-7) we find these words:

Do not steal

Do not commit adultery

Do not kill

The use of the words **do not** denote the prohibition of an act. If one acts contrary to what has been prohibited one will be acting against the law. The above taboos in Sepedi mean:

O seke wa utswa

O seke wa otshwa

O seke wa bolaya

There are words in Sepedi which are regarded as taboos. They are not supposed to be used in polite company. Some of these words are illustrated below:

Taboo	**Acceptable words**
Gafa	hlakane bjaša
Tagilwe	khoše
Rota	fahla magotlo
Kaka	ithoma
Makaka	mantle
Moroto	mohlapologo

There is no grammatical reason why the word *gafa* is 'unclean' wheras *hlakane bjaša* is 'clean' or preferred, or why *khoše* is acknowledged and *tagilwe* is not acceptable. Fromkin et al (2007:444) mention that although there is no grammatical basis for such preference, there certainly are sociolinguistic reasons to embrace or eschew such usages. *Khoše* and *fahla magotlo* are preferred for use instead of *tagwa* and *rota*. In the Sepedi culture words such as *tagilwe, rota* and *gafa* are regarded as taboos words. Apart from those mentioned there are also linguistic taboos in respect of body parts and sex.

A direct mention of sexual activities, especially sexual intercourse, is also taboo in Sepedi. As it is sometimes inevitable to mention these activities, Sepedi and many other African languages prefer euphemisms to refer to them:

Go tsena mapaing
(To get into the blanket)

Go kopana
(To meet each other)

Go robalana
(To sleep with each other)

Gola re lekane)
(To be of the same age)

Go hlobolelana
(To be naked)

Go nwa meetse
(To drink water)

Go tsuba motšoko
(To sniff snuff)

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Some of these euphemisms such as *go robalana, go hlobolelana* are now becoming taboo. They have lost their euphemistic character and are therefore regarded as vulgar words. Body parts and their functions are inevitable in medical profession. These are some of the words that create a problem in Sepedi.

Ntsotswana
(Penis)

Marago
(Buttocks)

Moroto
(Urine)

The above words are very quite sensitive and are not accepted in social situations, especially among the elders. Instead of using them the ones below are preferred:

Thoka ya motse
(Penis)

Di ka morago
(Buttocks)

Go fahla magotlo
(Urinate)

After the creation of human species the Lord bless them and said "Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control" *Good News Bible* (Genesis 1:28) In Sepedi culture women are seen as vessels to bear children. It is therefore a taboo for a woman who cannot bear children.

Mohale (2007:24) indicates that:

> Without children one is deemed to be unlucky, moreover, there will be no descendants born to him or her...The child, whose name is used in addressing the man, and is usually either a first born child or notorious child.

If a woman is not married or cannot bear children she becomes an outcast, and offensive words are used in addressing her, words such as:

Moopa
(Barren)

Lefetwa/ Letita

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(A spinster)

Death is scary and Sepedi uses euphemism to announce it.

Bo ya batho
(Where people go)

Bo huna matolo
(Bending knees)

Tšea ke phiri
(Taken by the hyena)

Raga lepai
(Kick the blanket)

Go ya bosabowe
(Not coming back)

Chiefs are respected members of the communities, and as such their death is announced differently. Euphemism is also applied, but rather different from that of ordinary members of the community. In Sepedi the death of a chief is announced in this manner:

Mabu a utswitšwe
(The soil has stolen)

Mogapa o mogolo o wele
(The large calabash has fallen)

Go welwa ke leru le leso
(Befallen by the dark cloud)

- **Registers common amongst the youth at Shatale**

Youths, like adults, have their own way of communicating among themselves. Below are some words common among youth living in Shatale. These words were spoken by some of the respondents during interviews:

Register	Sepulana equivalent	Northern Sotho	English
Byanya	tseya	utswa	steal
Komotela/gaula	go dya	go ja	to eat
Byerabyera	bolabola	bolela	talk
Fundekile	tšhutegiye	rutegile	educated
Kotlama	yetsela	robala	sleep
Magriza	kokwane	koko	old lady
Kgitla	teya	betha	beat

Sethalala/mogipa	toropo	toropo	town
Dikwekwe	dihuba	dikgara	chests
Zomnganga	bruku	orokgo	trouser
Setaitai	bafele	botse	beautiful
Segadimane	sebonabone	seipone	mirror
Kgexebe	ngaka	ngaka	whichdoctor
Nxosi	monyanana	moratho	sibling
Hondodo	matsaka	maaka	lies
Menola	taboga	tšhaba	runaway
Tugebyas	setlayela	lešilo	fool
Dladleng	gae	gae	home
Petapeta	bolabola ka matla	šwašwatha	talkative

They are people who are exposed to different languages. In Shatale they are exposed to language communities of Xitsonga, isiSwati, isiXhosa and isiZulu. Their language registers revolve around those language communities. For instance,"nxosi' is originally an isiZulu word having the same meaning as younger brother or younger sister. Other words cannot be traced back to their origin. A word like "tugebyas" meaning a "fool" has no known origin. The origin of "kgexebe" meaning a traditional healer is also unknown. What can be traced is the use of an 'x' which is associated with the Nguni Languages: isiZulu, isiSwati, isiNdebele and isiXhosa and is found in words such as:

Nxala
Xabana
Xolo
Nxobile
Xula

Their meaning in Sepedi, Sephalaborwa, Sepulana and English are as follows:

Northern Sotho

Thoma
Fapana/go lwa
Tshwarelo
Fentše
Opela

Sephalaborwa

Thoma
Go lwa
Lebalela
Fentje
Opelela

Sepulana

Thoma
Go lwa
Lebalela
Winne
Opelela

English

Start
Fight
Forgive
Win
Sing

- **Registers used in social situations**

A social situation is marked by an informal communication. The situation always directs the conversation. The words below are used mostly in social gatherings where there are no formal grammatical rules. When using these words participants seemed to be very much relaxed and content enjoying the intimacy of the group. This is the situation in which secrets are shared, guidance provided and jokes shared.

Registers	Sepulana equivalents	Northern Sotho	English
Naka la banna	sepayoni	thothotho	whisky
Kgabomadikana	befiye	befile	ugly
Maraksi	magogo	mokgekolo	old lady
Nkgekgenene	golo	kgolo	big
Tšangara	hlopega	sokola	suffering
Tladimologa	lutla	fafahla	mad
Ngamangama	leketsa	leka	trying
Mbhote	sesi	kgaitšedi	sister

Registers are projected in many ways. Besides the verbal registers, participants in the study mentioned non-verbal registers which they feel are the safest and less complicated in communicating between individuals. In verbal communication words are used to send message to listener. In non-verbal communication the use of signs and gestures is observed.

Non-verbal communication can be found in all language communities. Like any other language community, Sepulana also has its non-verbal registers. During an interview with the participants in Shatale Location, 10% of the respondents mentioned non-verbal registers which

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are applicable. The main aim of using non-verbal registers is to hide meaning to the third party. Below are some of the non-verbal registers mentioned by respondents who took part in the study in Shatale:

- **Non-verbal registers/silent registers**

Starring:

Starring has various meanings. If someone is doing something bad, starring will make him or her to stop the act. Some parents train their children to understand these kinds of registers. In the company of people, parents may discipline their children by giving them a long stare.

Open hands:

This type of non-verbal communication has two meanings. First, open hands may refer to a traditional healer. The meaning is attached to the act. Traditional healers throw healing bones to tell people about their fortunes or misfortunes. As they throw their bones they make sure that the client is satisfied and that no single bone is left in their hands. That is why they leave their hands open before they start communicating to their clients. Secondly, open hands mean that somebody has nothing to offer. For children open hands means they do not know. Men sometimes use open hands to welcome ladies. For men open hands is an act of welcoming.

Shrugging of shoulders:

Different meanings can be attached to this non-verbal communication. Shrugging of shoulders may mean that you do not know or is the way of denying something. One respondent mentioned that this is a non-verbal register common in teenage girls. A boy asks a girl out and as a response the girl shrugs her shoulders to indicate that she is not prepared to do so.

Clenching of fists:

This gesture has several meanings. It can mean preparation for a fight, or expression of, or a way of motivating others.

Shaking the head:

Denying something.

Two thumbs raised:

Means it is ok, but if the two thumbs are raised one behind the other this symbolises to run away.

Pulling out the tongue:

Pulling out the tongue and rubbing the upper lips is common in men. It means that the other party is economical with the truth. Pulling out the tongue and rubbing it on the upper lip means the man loves the woman and needs to kiss her.

Long face:

This is a non-verbal communication which is used in degrading a person.

Putting a finger vertical to the closed mouth:

A sign of telling someone to keep quiet.

Head resting on closed hands, especially on one side:
A desire to sleep.

Chin between middle and an index finger:

It symbolises a male person.

Winking of an eye:
This kind of a register is liked mostly by men. They like to wink at women. For men a wink means "I like you". Women are not supposed to wink. For women winking is prohibited. It is a taboo. The winking of an eye can also mark a secret agreement

between two parties.

<u>Rolling the eyes:</u>

This is a common register among teenage girls. It means 'whatever' or 'not interested'.

<u>Frowning eyebrows:</u>

It shows that a person is angry.

Non-verbal registers are common, the problem is that people employ them, to mean different things. In a hiking spot one person may point the middle finger up meaning that he or she is going to town, while the other may do the same to mean that he or she is alone.

- **Register for children**

Children learn language in an amazing way. First they imitate, utter two words, three and more. They attach the meaning to an act. Children of different communities have their way of speaking.

Children at Shatale location where the study is based use the term *Nwa;* to refer to water. *Nwa* means "I want to drink water, tea or anything liquid" or "I am thirsty". Shatale mothers understand these language registers. In most cases, parents teach and encourage their children to start talking by using registers.

Words like *tete, mmama or mamata and mmate* are common for children at Shatale. Their meaning in Sepulana, Sepedi and English is illustrated as follows:

Register	**Northern Sotho**	**Sepulana**	**English**
Tete	otsela (robala)	etsela	sleep
Mmama (Mamata)	mmeleke	lebese	milk

Mmate	bose	monate	delicious

Tete means to sleep and *mmama* means to be breastfed. There is no logical explanation why children say *tete* when they want to sleep. What we know is that they learnt it from their mothers. *Mama* is from the word *mamata* referring to mammary glands because when they suck milk they produce the sound *mmmmm*. The word could have originated from this act. Other registers used by children are listed below:

Child registers	Sepulana	Northern Sotho	English
Mekana	khisana	sunana	kissing
Mmate	natefa	bose	nice
Nanana	banana	banana	banana
Bba	bušwa	bogobe	porridge
Hamm	kare	koloi	car
Tataa	gabotši	gabotse	bye bye

- **Registers for objects**

Register	Sepulana equivalent	Northern Sotho	English
Setaitai	llampa	lebone	light
ntšikilintšikili	mareni	mangina	earings
mawuwawuwane	mantlwantlwane	mantlwane	playing pretend
sefoto	sethombhe	seswantšho	picture
lentswe	letlapa	leswika	stone

Some objects are named according to the work they do. A mirror is reffered to as *setaitai* because it reflects anything. *Ntsikilintsikili* are earings. They hang from the ears, hence the name.

- **Registers referring to animals**

Register	Sepulana equivalent	Northern Sotho	English
Papandhiši	pongolo	tonki/	donkey

| mmapelekuše | sebelekwane | mokgaditswane | lizard |
| Obe | tšhwena | tšhwene | baboon |

• Registers for counting one up to ten

The *Oxford Learners Dictionary* (2003:104) defines the term count as "say numbers in their proper order". The origin of this counting in a register is not known. This counting method has been passed from one generation to the other. Among all the respondents interviewed, only adults know this method of counting. Below are numbers in the Register, Sepulana, Sepedi and their explanation in English:

Register	Sepulana	Northern Sotho	English
Tletlitle	tee	tee	one
Tletletle	pedi	pedi	two
Makona	tharo	tharo	three
Mašapo	nne	nne	four
Palamno	tlhano	tlhano	five
Senapo	selela	tshela	six
Senamtšhu	šupa	šupa	seven
Kwei	seswai	seswai	eight
Maifo	senyane	senyane	nine
Lesome	lesome	lešome	ten

• Jokes

Registers are good for jokes. They set people apart, showing who they are.

Wena wa manotlo a di bhoutu dibula metšti wone ke re tswaa-You skinny person draw water for me.

The conversation above occurs when a person is making fun of someone. Words such as *segeyageya* > (fool), *talamafifi* > (black) are used to mock or to make fun of someone. Below are some of the registers people in Shatale use when making jokes:

Register	Sepulana	Northern Sotho	English
Segeyageya	setlayela	lešilo	fool
Manotlo	matolo	dikhuru	knee
Talamafifi	phifadu	ntsho	black
Dibula metši	goga metši	go kga	draw water
Dinempe	dithombe	diswantšho	badges

What are the impacts of language registers on social and educational spheres?

This question was posed to determine whether language registers have negative impact on social and educational spheres. The table below illustrates the feeling of the respondents about the question.

TABLE 2

	Youth	%	Educators	%	community members	%
Negative impact	12	80	30	100	8	53.3
Positive impact	3	20	0	0	7	46.6

From the table above one can conclude that indeed language registers have negative impact on social and education spheres. Eighty percent of youth, 100% of educators and 53.3% of community members (53.3%) pointed out the impact language registers have to the people living in that area and how the registers make communication difficult, especially where Sepedi is used as a source language.

The users of these registers claim that they elevate them socially, drawing the line between individuals. One hundred percent of educators state that registers group people according to their status or prestige. In the educational sphere, 100% of educators responded by indicating the difficulty they encounter on school grounds and in the classrooms. They pointed out that registers hindered communication in schools. The language learners use outside the school premises and on the school grounds is brought into the classrooms. Most learners' work is written in language registers which educators are not familiar with. These are some of the registers found in the school premises:

Register	English	Real meaning	Northern Sotho
Ba ntlwepiye off	written off	expelled from school	ba nkobile sekolong
Mbazo	remind	copy/refer	kopiša
Nšhihliye	absorbed	admitted in school	amogela
phura matlapa	rough page	fail	paletšwe

Eighty percent of learners remark that they find it difficult or they struggle to find the right words when they are in the formal situations. They say in the classrooms they are forced to conform to the rules of the source language which is Sepedi. One percent of the learners indicated "the reason for poor performance of many learners in Sepedi may be the result of registers which are prevalence in Shatale". When asked how their matric results usually ranged on the scale of lowest symbol to the highest symbol, the following percentages was revealed:

60% High grade 6
50% High grade 4
40% High grade 3
50% Standard grade 2

Normally, a child should obtain high marks in his or her home language. It is a different case with learners at Shatale. One of the reasons for this is the use of registers in formal communication. Currently this is of course not allowed and encouraged.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Language registers are developing on a daily basis, making it difficult for people to communicate. In the school context, the situation becomes even worse as learners use informal language in their school work. This means that language registers affect people socially and educationally.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter serves as the conclusion of the study. It consists of various chapters, and gives the findings and recommendations.

5.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one highlights reasons for the undertaking of the study, the historical background of *Mapulana a ga Mogane* who speak Sepulana dialect, and language registers prevalent in Mapulaneng area and the background to the study.

Chapter two outlines the meaning of terms defined by different scholars, in particular the term register as the study focused on language registers which are prevalent at Shatale location in Bushbuckridge. This chapter also provides types of registers spoken by people around Shatale area.

Chapter three provides types of Northern Sotho dialects, where they are spoken and how they are used comparing them with the standard Northern Sotho. Dialects are a variety of language spoken in specific areas with no written form. From the definition one can conclude that Sepulana, Khelobedu, Sehananwa and Sephalaborwa are dialects used in specific areas.

Chapter four provides the discussion of language registers in the Sepulana dialect, meaning of words and their pronounciation as compared to Sepulana and the standard Northern Sotho.

5.3 FINDINGS

The findings in the study are that:

- Dialects have negative impact on the learning of standard language, in this case Northern Sotho.
- Dialects differ radically from the standard language.
- Language registers develop daily and that they make it difficult for people to communicate.
- The high failure rate in the standard language in Shatale is caused among others by the use of registers found in that area.
- Some learners use language registers in their school work which is frustrating to educators.

- Registers lead to the growth of a language if accepted by formal structures such as Pan South African Language Board.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher therefore, makes the following recommendations:

- Khelobedu, Sepulana, Sehananwa and Sephalaborwa dialects should be promoted and developed so that they can become part of standard Northern Sotho. This may also help the young generation to value language and to be able to distinguish the difference between language and dialects.
- The speakers must be encouraged to use dialects and registers for socializing.
- Educational bodies must be encouraged to recognize registers as vital components of Northern Sotho.

5.5 CONCLUSION

From the discussion throughout the study, it is clear that language registers and dialects have a negative impact on the standard language, Northern Sotho. Learners at Shatale location do not perform well in their mother tongue due to different codes which are in use in that area. In order to change this, a paradigm shift is needed. Language structures must recognise that registers, if well handled, can help in the growth of a language as they lead to the creation of new terminology.

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